

Director's Report

April 2003

Marc Gaspard, executive director

WASHINGTON
**HIGHER
EDUCATION**
COORDINATING BOARD

Legislative session scheduled to end April 27

By Marc Gaspard

The 2003 legislative session is drawing to a close, with adjournment scheduled for Sunday. It is still too soon to tell whether budget negotiators will be able to finish their work on time, as fairly significant differences remain between the House and Senate budget proposals. One notable distinction is the proposed tuition increase, which is 9 percent in the Senate plan, and 5 percent in the House version. In addition, the House proposes a combination of budget cuts and new revenue to bridge the state's \$2.7 billion shortfall, while the Senate would rely primarily on budget cuts.

May 15 is Washington Scholars Day, an annual celebration of 147 of the state's most accomplished high school seniors. The Washington Scholars Program — now in its 21st year — recognizes the accomplishments of three high school seniors from each of the state's 49 legislative districts. Students receive the scholarships for up to four years of public resident undergraduate tuition and fees, and the funds can be used at any Washington public

or independent college or university. In fiscal year 2003, the program will use \$1.4 million to help about 400 students. ? Students are chosen on the basis of academic achievement, leadership and community service.

On April 14, the **GET committee voted to shelve plans for a college savings program**, based on data from ICMA Retirement Corp., the investment group that was to have developed and administered a Washington state plan this fall. ICMA cited the difficult state and national economic conditions and investment climate, as well as a weakened stock market and the withdrawal of record-keeping partner SCT Corp. from the college savings market. The committee may revisit the issue later, if economic conditions improve and the plan becomes feasible. During its meeting, the GET committee also voted to approve a cost increase, raising the unit price from \$52 to \$57. The adjustment will take effect May 1, and applies only to lump sum purchases through August 31.

I am pleased to announce that **Ann Ramsay-Jenkins and Stacey Valentin have been confirmed by the Senate to serve as gubernatorial appointees to the HECB.**

HECB awards \$1 million in Improving Teacher Quality Grants

Funded through the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, the Washington Improving Teacher Quality Grant program funds partnerships aimed at increasing academic achievement in public and private elementary and secondary schools. The HECB administers the program.

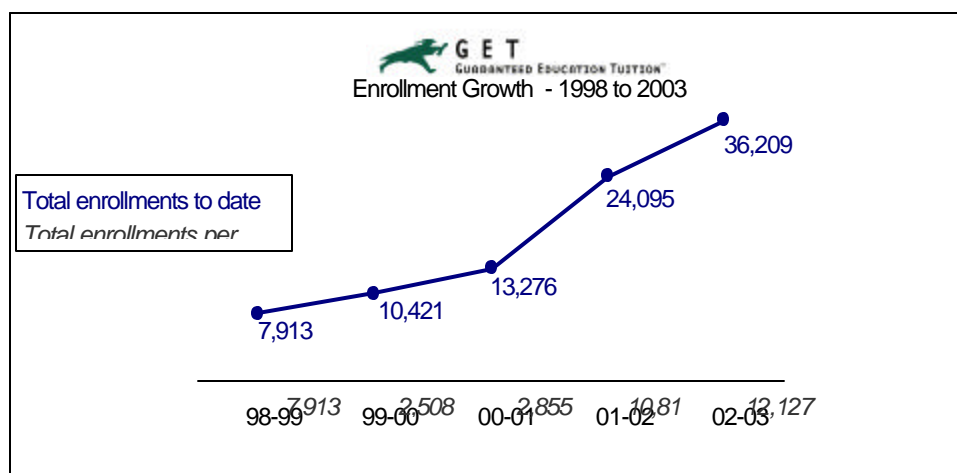
For 2002-2004, the HECB is awarding \$1,136,002 in grants for intensive professional development projects in reading, math, and leadership. All partnerships include a college of education, a school of arts and sciences, and a high-need K-12 school, with the colleges serving as fiscal agents for the grants.

Twenty proposals were submitted to the HECB by the Feb. 12 deadline, and eight are being funded: five sponsored by public universities, two sponsored by private colleges, and one sponsored by a community college. The projects will be operational from April 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004.

Grantees are: Eastern Washington University, along with nine Northeast Washington school districts and two private schools; EWU and the Wellpinit School District, Spokane Indian Reservation and Salish-Kooteni College; Heritage College and the Sunnyside, Grandview and Mabton School Districts; Saint Martin's College, with the Elma, Hoquiam and McCleary School Districts; the University of Washington, with Peninsula College and the Crescent School District; WSU Vancouver and eight Southwest Washington school districts; Western Washington University and the Cape Flattery School District; and Yakima Valley Community College and the Sunnyside School District.

2002-03 GET enrollment closes

Accounts show steady growth over time



a reminder...

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Staff news

Kathy McVay, program associate for the Health Professional Loan Repayment/Scholarship Program, has been reelected secretary for the board of directors of the Washington Rural Health Association.

Kathy also is a member of the Rural Development Council's Resource Team and has participated in a community assessment in Quincy, Washington. The teams help local residents take an active role in shaping their communities. In her spare time, Kathy continues to serve as councilwoman for the city of Fircrest.

In other Health Professional Program news, **Teresa Mowitch** has been hired to serve as program coordinator and will begin May 5. Teresa has been a program manager with the Quinault Nation and served as a social services assistant with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She is a former recipient of the American Indian Endowed Scholarship and a recent graduate of The Evergreen State College.

Michael Ball, associate director for the State Approving Agency and Degree Authorization, will be an instructor at the National Association of State Approving Agencies National Training Institute in Atlanta May 4-6. The agencies are charged with approving education and training programs for those using GI Bill benefits. Ball will teach licensing and certification test approvals, contract management, business plan development, and agency self-evaluations.

Promise scholarship applications go high-tech

Every spring, counselors and principals from about 500 Washington high schools submit the names of the schools' top seniors to the HECB, as the first step toward helping some of the state's brightest students go to college. Until this year, the submittal process for the Washington Promise Scholarship happened the old-fashioned way: school officials printed the information on paper and sent it to Olympia — or mailed in a computer disk. Now, however, thanks to the work of Lead Systems Analyst **Pat Castaldo**, principals are able to submit their students' academic information online. Pat created a Web page that prompts a user for the requested information and enables them to return the completed form with the touch of a button. So far, the names, addresses, phone numbers and birth dates of nearly 10,000 students have been submitted, with more than half

responding directly to the Web site. This year, however, even the other 44 percent had to abandon the paper trail: their only other option was uploading an Excel spreadsheet. While making life easier for principals and counselors, the new process also has saved a lot of time for HECB staff. ? Now in its fourth year, the Washington Promise Scholarship helps some of the state's brightest students who come from low- and middle-income families. Family income cannot exceed 135 percent of the state's median family income. Because schools are not privy to families' economic data, qualified students interested in applying for the scholarship provide financial information directly to the HECB. During fiscal year 2003, the program will use approximately \$6.3 million in state money to help about 6,700 students go to college.

Record statistics mark end of GET 2002-03 enrollment year

- ❖ Total calls received: 16,639.
- ❖ More than \$5 million was deposited into the account on both March 31 and April 1 – an all-time high for the program.
- ❖ Nearly half of all new enrollments were online.
- ❖ More than 8,400 new enrollments were added during March – including 2,000 online enrollments on March 31.



GET

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GET program update: Final numbers for enrollment period ending March 31*

Current active accounts: 36,209
Total new enrollment for 2002-03: 12,127
Total payments received: \$231.5 million*
Total units purchased: 6.4 million*
Total value of accounts: \$330 million*

*2003-04 enrollment year:
September 15, 2003 — March 31, 2004*

**estimate; not all enrollments have been entered into the system*